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XVIII. *Several Observations in Natural History, made at North-Bierley in Yorkshire, by Dr. Richard Richardson (M. D.) Communicated in a Letter to Dr. Hans Sloane, R. S. Secr.*

*North-Bierley, June, 12. 1713.*

*Sir,*

**I** Shall begin my Observations with such as relate to Human Kind, which are only two, and those within the Township of *North-Bierley*. The first was of *John Worsnape*, a poor Boy, who liv'd till he was 17 Years old, and never made Water, and yet was in perfect Health, and Vigorous and Active. He had constantly a *Diarrhaea* upon him, but without much uneasiness. The Obstruction must have been in his Kidneys, for he had never any Inclination to make Water. The Serous Part of the Blood, which should have been thrown off by Urine, was discharg'd by the *Cœlaick* and *Mesenterick* Arteries, by the Mediation of the Glands, into the Guts. He dyed of a Fever.

The second is an Instance of Old Age in *Martha Waterhouse* and *Hester Jager*, both Born in the Township of *North-Bierley*, and Sisters. *Martha* married to *John Waterhouse*; *Hester* died unmarried. *Martha* died about two Years ago, in the Hundred and fourth Year of her Age; and *Hester* this present Year 1713. in the Hundred

Hundred and seventh Year of her Age. They had both of them Relief from the Township of *North-Bierley* nigh fifty Years. I should not have taken Notice of their Age separately, it falling so far short of several Instances which have happened in this County ; but jointly I do not remember any that have come up to them.

From the Longevity of Humane Kind, I shall proceed to the Longevity of Fish out of their proper Element. About six Years ago, great quantities of *Tench* were taken in a Pond belonging to *Stephen Tempest of Broughton* in *Craven* Esq; and were sent to the Neighbouring Markets. The Fish were taken on *Monday* towards Night, and some brought to *Bradford* on *Tuesday* about the same time ; and not being frequent in our Markets, Six of them were sent hither by *Mr Ferrand the Vicar* on *Wednesday*. I not being at Home, the Basket was set upon the Kitchen Table, not far from a good Fire ; where it continued till *Thursday* Morning (the Servants not knowing what was in it.) Upon opening the Basket, and looking upon the Fish, I thought the Eyes of some of them look'd clear : I put two of them into a Pail of Water, and in less than two Hours time they swam very lively in the Water. The remaining four having no signs of Life upon them, I put them into the same Pail, and before Night they all swam about in it.

*Burbot* being a Fish not frequently met with in the Southern Rivers of *England*, are often found in this County, especially in slow Rivers and standing Waters, as in the River *Foss* in *York*, and also in *Derwent* ; but in no Place more frequent, than in the Fen Ditches of the Levels, about four Miles from *Doncaster*.

I have been several times present, when plenty of small *Trouts* have been caught in the mountainous Lakes of *North Wales* by Angling ; and have, with no small Admiratio[n], consider'd the difficult Access to these Places, where

where a good Footman can scarce climb up to them. That these Lakes are yearly supplied from the Brooks at the Bottom of the Mountains I do not at all doubt, especially in Spawning time, when the Trouts endeavour to surmount all Difficulties, by passing up the small Rivulets, to deposit their Spawn, for the Preservation of their Species, where it is the most secure from the Violence of other Fishes, and there by accident fall into these Natural Ponds, where they continue all Summer; no Person having yet observed (that I know of) Trouts to breed in Ponds. Not only the Trouts that are taken in these mountainous Lakes are small, but also the Charrs that are taken as they ascend the small River out of the great Lakes nigh *Lhan Berys*, to deposit their Spawn in the Sands there. These very rarely exceed a fresh Herring in magnitude, as I have been assured by the Reverend Mr. *Evans*, Vicar of *Lhan Berys*, who has been present when hundreds of them have been caught; and by the account he gives of them they are in no respect different from those taken in *Winander-Mear*, save in magnitude, where 'tis no rare thing to meet with them of two Pound weight and upwards. This smallness in Fishes I have some time thought to proceed from the Coldness of the Water, these Lakes being supplied with Snow Water from the Mountains eight Months in twelve. The *minera* of Vitriol and Allum, being often met with, in the Hills through which some of the Water must drain, perhaps does not a little contribute to the roughness and coldness of the Water. The Contrary we find in our Waters that run through the Limestone Rocks, where no rough Salts are found; the Trouts there are large and fat. An instance of this we find in the Trouts in *Malham Tarr* in *Craven*, nigh *Settle*, where they are frequently found two Foot long.

I must also take leave to correct one Mistake in Mr. Ray's *Synopsis Quadruped. &c.* p. 195. where he says, that *Mustela vulgaris* is called here a *Foumart* or *Fitchet*. *Putorius* is called here a *Foumart*, *quasi* foul Mart, or stinking Mart, in opposition to the *Martes* which emit a musky Smell, and are often met with in our Woods, and taken by the Hunters in Snows.

The *Ermin* is not unfrequently met with here in Winter, and look'd upon, when they appear, to presage Snow. I should not here have taken Notice of it, it being also met with in most *Counties of England*, but that I have had an opportunity, in two or three Instances, of observing the Time of its Changes. It begins to change its Colour from Brown to White, about the beginning of *November*. I had one of them brought me about *November* was two Years, when I first observed this change. I have seen one or two of them, that in the beginning of *March* were changing from White to Brown. *Qu.* Whether these Animals do not always continue White in the more Northern Parts of the World ?

The *Nut-hatch*, or *Nut-jobber*, is not frequently to be met with in the South, yet is so common with us, that I have sometimes seen six or seven of them in one Day in my own Woods. This must be the Bird that Dr. *Plot* in his *Nat. Hist. of Oxfordshire*, calls a *Wood-Cracker*, and takes to be an undescribed Bird. I have with much Pleasure often observed these Birds to crack Nuts, which they do with very great Dexterity. I order'd one of my Servants, that was with me in a Wood last *Christ-mas*, to observe from whence she fetch'd her Provision ; which he soon discover'd in a hollow Tree, and cutting the Place open, brought from thence several Pints of very choice Nuts.

I met with a Nest of the *Regulus Crisatus*, in a thick Thorn Hedge, in my own Orchard, which was built round,

round, and a little Hole at the side ; the outside was green Moss, the inside Hair and Feathers, not much unlike that of the common Wren. The Eggs were small and white, with many brown Spots upon them. The Note of the Cock is very agreeable, not much unlike some of the *Parus* Kind. I do not remember that I have seen any of these Birds in Summer before.

*Coclea pomatia major edulis* *Gesneri.* I never met with it in the North ; but I found it in plenty last Year about the middle of *May*, in *Stunsfield* Fields, amongst the Briers and Brakes, especially nigh the famous *Roman* Pavement.

I am, &c.

RICHARDSON.